



Fresh School Meals

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CAULIFLOWER

Mashed potatoes are one of the staples of growing up in the Midwest. Let's try something new by replacing the potatoes with a fuller, richer tasting smashed cauliflower.

According to Mark Twain, "cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education." It is one of several vegetables in the species *Brassica oleracea*, in the family *Brassicaceae*. This "family" also includes broccoli, and cabbage.

Cauliflower was developed as an annual whose flowers are allowed to go unpicked. This tightly packed head of florets are transformed into a "head" or a mass of undeveloped flowers technically called the curd. Cauliflower can range in color from white (as we Americans know it) to purple to my favorite one which is pale green called Romanesco with cone shaped spiraled florets. It is typically only the head that is consumed, although, the leaves and stem are edible.



Cauliflower is high in Vitamin C and low in calories and carbohydrates. It is a good source for Fiber and Folate.

Look for heads of cauliflower that are unblemished, solid, and heavy with fresh green leaves. Avoid heads that show signs of spreading, rust, wilt or yellowish leaves. Cauliflower can be stored wrapped under refrigeration for up to a day or two.



Rather than boiling the rich flavor of the cauliflower away, try roasting in a foil pouch to concentrate the natural goodness. Foil roasting is easy, clean and captures all the subtle flavors of the delicate cauliflower.

On the next page you will find a fabulous Parmesan Cauliflower Smash recipe.



PARMESAN CAULIFLOWER SMASH

Makes 8 servings of about 5 grams of carbohydrates,
3 grams of protein and 3 grams fiber each
Prep Time about 10 minutes - Cook Time about 50 minutes



Ingredients:

- 2 large head of cauliflower, cut into small florets to yield 8 cups
- Canola or Blend Olive Oil
- Sea Salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
Optional
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

In a large bowl combine the florets and oil tossing to coat. Season generously with salt and pepper. Lay a very large piece of aluminum foil on your countertop. Transfer the seasoned florets on the lower half of the foil. Fold over the top half of the foil, crimping the edges of the foil to seal into a large envelope or pouch. Place the foil on a sheet pan and position on the lower rack of the oven, cooking until very tender about 45 minutes.

Remove from the oven and allow to cool slightly for about 10 minutes. Carefully transfer the florets to a food processor in batches, pureeing until smooth with a little butter and Parmesan. Adjust seasoning as necessary. Transfer the pureed cauliflower into a baking dish to keep warm. Repeat pureeing the remaining florets. Smooth the top of the cauliflower and top with the remaining Parmesan. Cover with aluminum foil and keep warm until ready to serve.

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Additional Recipes

From USDA's Recipe Finder Database: (click on text)

- Broccoli and Cauliflower Polonaise I-16
- Herbed Broccoli and Cauliflower Polonaise I-18
- Tossed Salad
- Pasta Primavera
- Chinese Style Vegetables I-09
- Buddha's Veggie Stir-Fry
- Stir-Fry Vegetables I-10
- Cheesy Veggies



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